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Law soon to tackle corruption in judiciary: Veerappa Moily

Special Correspondent

It also has to factor in the need to protect the judiciary from vexatious litigations



Veerappa Moily

THIRUVANANTHAPURAM: The Centre will soon bring in legislation to tackle issues related to accountability and corruption in the judiciary, including provision for punishment, Union Law Minister M. Veerappa Moily said on Sunday.

Addressing a meet-the-press programme organised by the Kesari Journalists' Trust here, Mr. Moily said the Centre had already withdrawn a Bill, introduced in the previous Lok Sabha, amending the Judges Inquiry Act of 1968. The new legislation, the draft of which was ready, would have a holistic approach to discipline and corruption, with definite provisions to punish judges for corruption, or acts of omission and commission. However, this would be implemented by taking the judiciary into confidence. The government did not intend to have a confrontation with the judiciary, but would like to create an environment of equality and rule of law, in which the last litigant in the queue too would have access to justice.

He said the judiciary was an important institution with a high credibility, but judicial officers had several limitations, as there was no platform for them to reply to allegations. Therefore, the new law also had to factor in the need to protect the judiciary from vexatious litigations.

Mr. Moily said a three-member committee, consisting of Home Minister P. Chidambaram, Health Minister Ghulam Nabi Azad and himself, would soon meet to consider whether Section 377 of the Indian Penal Code that criminalises sexual expression by homosexuals, bisexuals and transsexuals needed revision. The committee would consider the views of all sections.

Mr. Moily said the IPC was outdated and needed revision. But no integrated effort had been

made so far to amend it. There were more than 120 reports of the Law Commission before the government. He proposed to confine the government to actionable programmes with the larger objective of making the judiciary accessible to all.

As for the anti-terrorist laws, Mr. Moily said the National Administrative Reforms Commission, of which he was the chairman, had made several recommendations. After the Mumbai terror attacks, several of them were implemented, and several more things needed to be done.

To a question on the difficulties faced by the Scheduled Castes and the Scheduled Tribes in gaining access to higher education in self-financing institutions, Mr. Moily said the 93rd Amendment to the Constitution had brought in several provisions to empower the States to prepare regulations and rules for the self-financing institutions. But unfortunately, very few States had taken action.

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